

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-08 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08
FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06
SP-02 CIEP-02 OMB-01 CAB-05 DODE-00 DOTE-00 FAA-00
PA-02 PRS-01 L-03 H-02 /085 W
-----151927Z 052096 /45

P 151850Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 678
AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS LONDON 2688

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EAIR, UV, BEXP, UK
SUBJ: PAN AFRICAN AIR INDUSTRIES (PAAI) PURCHASE OF
10 BELFAST AIRCRAFT ANNOUNCED

1. FINANCIAL TIMES, GUARDIAN AND DAILY TELEGRAPH CARRIED SHORT ARTICLES FEBRUARY 11 REPORTING THAT RAF'S ENTIRE FLEET OF 10 BELFAST STRATEGIC TRANSPORTS HAVE BEEN SOLD BY THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE TO THE U.S. COMPANY PAN AFRICAN AIR FREIGHT-LINERS (A MEMBER OF THE PAN AFRICAN INDUSTRIES GROUP) FOR USE IN AIR FREIGHT OPERATIONS IN WEST AFRICA. VALUE OF THE DEAL WAS NOT DISCLOSED, BUT PAAI REP IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT WHEN EACH AIRCRAFT HAS BEEN CONVERTED, IT WILL BE INSURED WITH LLOYDS FOR TWO MILLION DOLLARS. AIR COMMANDER TEDDY DONALDSON, WRITING IN THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, SAID "PAN AFRICAN IS BELIEVED TO HAVE PAID ONE MILLION POUNDS EACH FOR THE BELFASTS." THERE WERE SUPPOSEDLY 80 OTHER BIDDERS INVOLVED. EACH ARTICLE SPECULATES THAT AS MANY AS 200 FORMER RAF PERSONNEL MAY BE HIRED TO MAINTAIN THE FLEET.

2. FURTHER UPI ARTICLE OVER WEEK-END REPORTS CONSERVA-
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TIVE MP AS SAYING HE WILL RAISE QUESTION IN HOUSE OF COMMONS OVER HOW MUCH THE GOVERNMENT GOT FOR THE BELFASTS. "I SUSPECT THEY WENT FOR A SONG," HE IS REPORTED AS SAYING. THERE DOES NOT APPEAR, HOWEVER, TO HAVE BEEN ANY OTHER REACTION ALONG THESE LINES.

3. FINANCIAL TIMES ARTICLE STATES THAT "ACQUISITION OF

THE ENTIRE FLEET MAKES PAN AFRICAN THE BIGGEST COMMERCIAL FREIGHT OPERATOR IN THE WORLD." THIS STATEMENT WAS LIFTED DIRECTLY FROM PAII FEBRUARY 10 PRESS RELEASE. HOWEVER, BY TIME PRESS RELEASE REACHED EMBASSY, WORDS "ONE OF" HAD BEEN PENCILED IN BEFORE PHRASE "THE LARGEST COMMERCIAL FREIGHT CARRIER." WHEN QUERIED ON THIS, COL. ROBERTSON (PRESIDENT OF PAN AFRICAN FREIGHT LINES) SAID THAT IF ONE TAKES ONLY FREIGHT HAULERS AND NOT MIXED TRANSPORTERS, THIS STATEMENT IS "JOURNALISTICALLY" CORRECT.

4. COPIES OF NEWS ARTICLES, PAII NEWS RELEASE, PAII END-USER STATEMENT SUBMITTED TO BRITISH GOVERNMENT, AND LETTER TO COL. ROBERTSON FROM ANTOINE YAMEOGO APPLAUDING UK GOVERNMENT FOR ACCEPTING PAAI BID FOR AIRCRAFT WILL BE POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT AND OUAGADOUGOU ASAP.

ARMSTRONG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT, AIRCRAFT SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 15-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Litigation History:
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TAGS: EAIR, BEXP, UV, UK, PAAI
To: OUAGADOUGOU
Type: TE
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